

To the commission:

I believe implementation of cell phone use on commercial airplanes would be premature at this time. My observations of its use on the bus and in public places lead me to believe we as a people lack the social judgment needed to go along with this new technology, so to impose it on people in the small enclosed environment of an airplane for a fixed duration of a flight is not welcome by me and others.

Let me give some examples. A fellow on the seat in front of me on the bus rang up his girlfriend at work for the stated purpose of hearing her voice and using up the remaining minutes on his phone plan. Yes, but we all had to hear his voice for those minutes. And wasn't his girlfriend busy at work?

If we allow cell phone use on planes, people who are missing their loved ones will be calling them, interrupting their business for the sake of hearing their voices. Okay, that's bad enough but the other passengers have to hear this end of the conversation.

There is a blind man who pushes a cart around. One day he was coming down the sidewalk when a woman walking across his path and talking on her cell phone ran into his cart. "Why don't you watch where you're going!" she told him. Some cell phone users think the world must make way for them, never mind the inconvenience of those around them.

Another man was leaving a message via his cell phone on the machine of a girl he was trying to impress. He was calling from the men's room of a theater, oblivious to his environment until somebody flushed, then he quickly ended it. Another case of insensitivity to one's environment.

I've heard lawyers on the bus discussing confidential information. Some people use a booming voice on their cells, completely beyond what is called for. One man's girlfriend justified his shouting by saying he was talking to his boss. Fine, but I had spent all day having to listen to a boss, and now I was off and wanted some peace, riding the bus, and I had to hear a loud conversation with a boss again.

When I grew up in the country we had a party line. Our parents explained to us some basic rules of courtesy. We learned our ring. We were told not to hog the phone, not to discuss personal matters that we wouldn't want someone else to hear, and to relinquish the phone in an emergency. There is no similar etiquette that is largely followed by current cell phone users. No, the technology is too new and people too busy to learn. Their use of cell phones will intrude on the people around them with total disregard. For the merest whim they will talk (loud) on their phones disturbing the peace of those around them. Even were it an important call, they won't keep their voice down. They will discuss all kinds of personal things that we don't want to, or shouldn't, hear. And what happens in a widespread emergency? The cell phone system gets so jammed that nobody can use it. The system can't handle everybody talking at once, but the cell phone users don't know to stay off it in a widespread emergency so that people with true emergency communication have a chance to get through.

Even if we have a new generation of electronics on planes immune to RFI from

cell phones, this generation of users, by and large, doesn't know how to be courteous with their phones. Until that happens I think cell phone use on planes should continue to be banned in order to give the captive passengers some peace.

Sincerely,
Earl S. Gosnell III